

F&W COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

Meeting Date: July 9, 2014

Agenda Item: Approval of the Fish and Wildlife Budget and Legislative Proposals

Division: Director's Office

Action Needed:

☐ Approval of Tentative Rule

☒ Approval of Final Rule/Action

☐ Endorse Course of Action

☐ None - information only

Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation: 30 minutes

Background:

Montana statutes delegate authority to the F&W Commission to review and approve the Fish and Wildlife budget prior to submission to the Governor. Statutes also give the Commission authority to establish policy direction for the agency, which includes direction regarding legislative proposals. FWP addresses these obligations by reviewing broad fiscal and legislative priorities with the Commission early in the executive planning process (February 2014 Commission meeting) and presenting requests for new work and for legislative proposals in July for final approval.

Public Involvement Process & Results:

No formal public process is undertaken directly related to the budget detail or the legislative proposals. However, the broad priorities that give direction to the budget detail and the proposed legislation are based on our ongoing dialogue with constituents and regional citizen advisory councils. The public is also afforded the opportunity to comment on budget and legislative proposals through the Commission meeting process.

Alternatives and Analysis:

The Commission can approve or suggest modifications to the agency's budget and legislative proposals. The budget proposals reflect a careful balancing of revenue projections with the need to address the agency's priorities and the Governor's Office direction. This budget reflects FWP's plan to balance expenditures with revenues while sustaining positive fund balances through FY19. Adding proposals to the budget request could reduce the fund balances faster than planned; eliminating any of the proposals could extend the current fund balances further into the future.

Agency Recommendation & Rationale):

The Department recommends the Commission approve the budget request and the legislative proposals as presented.

Proposed Motion:

I move the Commission approve the Department's budget request and the legislative proposals.